

ELDRITCH

JOURNEYS



STORY AND ART BY
SHAWNA NASH GARRY

If you'd asked me a year ago how I'd start my Christmas morning... I never would have suggested that it'd be on a beach... Let alone on a beach as a werewolf, one who'd been kidnapped by a werewolf cult and taken across the world, only to be rescued by a fairytale wolf, a coyote spirit guide, and a crow-tengu. It's amazing where life will take you, though, I kinda bet this is life's sick idea of a joke.



SO... NOW, EXACTLY, ARE WE GETTING BACK HOME?

OH, THAT'S THE BEST PART!!!...

HIM, I THINK
TY RAN BACK TO
OTHERS TO LET THEM
KNOW WE HAVE YOU,
HE VANISHED AS SOON
AS WE CAUGHT
YOUR SCENT.

DYLAN, WOULD YOU MIND
SIGNALING TY SO HE CAN TELL THEM TO
LOWER THE GLAMOUR?

SHURE!

BUT THEN I
REALLY NEED TO
GET UP AND START
WORK, NOW THAT
FAITH'S GONNA BE
OKAY... SORRY
GUYS, SEE YOU
LATER!

UH... WHAT'S GOING ON?

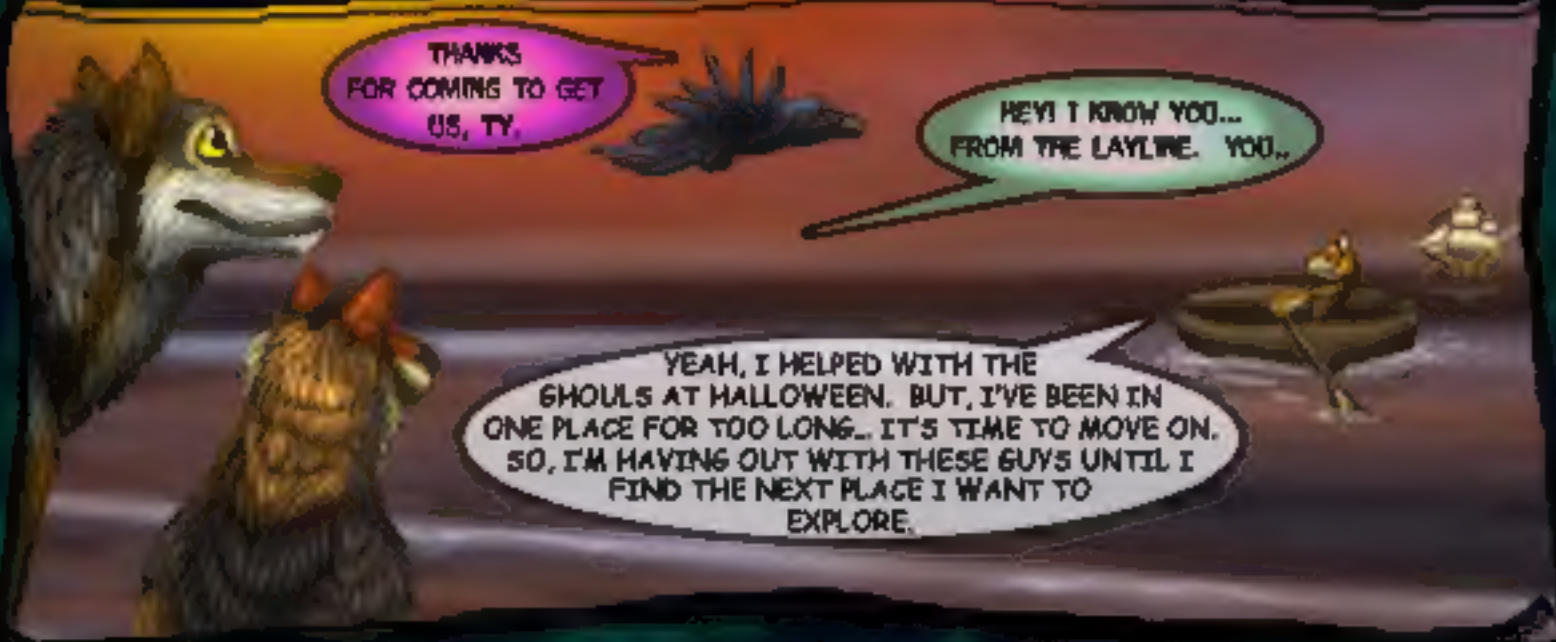


I... IS THAT A PIRATE SHIP?

THAT'S THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, UNDER THE COMMAND OF CAPTAIN WILLEM VANDERDECKEN OF VER-NEUZEN. IT CAN'T REALLY COME ASHORE, SO WE HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE LITTLE BOATS TO COME GET US...

I... I THOUGHT THE FLYING DUTCHMAN WAS BAD OR SOMETHING?

THAT DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW. FOR FOLKS LIKE US, IT'S A VERY GOOD THING.



THANKS
FOR COMING TO GET
US, TY.

HEY! I KNOW YOU...
FROM THE LAYLINE. YOU..

YEAH, I HELPED WITH THE
GHOULS AT HALLOWEEN. BUT, I'VE BEEN IN
ONE PLACE FOR TOO LONG.. IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON.
SO, I'M HAVING OUT WITH THESE GUYS UNTIL I
FIND THE NEXT PLACE I WANT TO
EXPLORE.



HOW DO YOU KNOW
YOU'VE BEEN IN ONE PLACE FOR
TOO LONG?

YOU COULD SAY THAT THE
DREAMTIME LET ME KNOW.

DREAMTIME?



IT IS THE TIME OF THE
CREATION OF THE WORLD.

WASN'T THAT A
LONG TIME AGO, THEN?

WHO SAYS THE
WORLD IS FINISHED? THE DREAMING
CONTINUES, AND ALL LIFE HAS ALWAYS
BEEN, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE
WITHIN THE DREAMING..

YOU MAKE NO SENSE.



IT'S OKAY, TY, I GET YOU.
YOU SEE PAST THE VEIL.

SOMETHING
LIKE THAT...



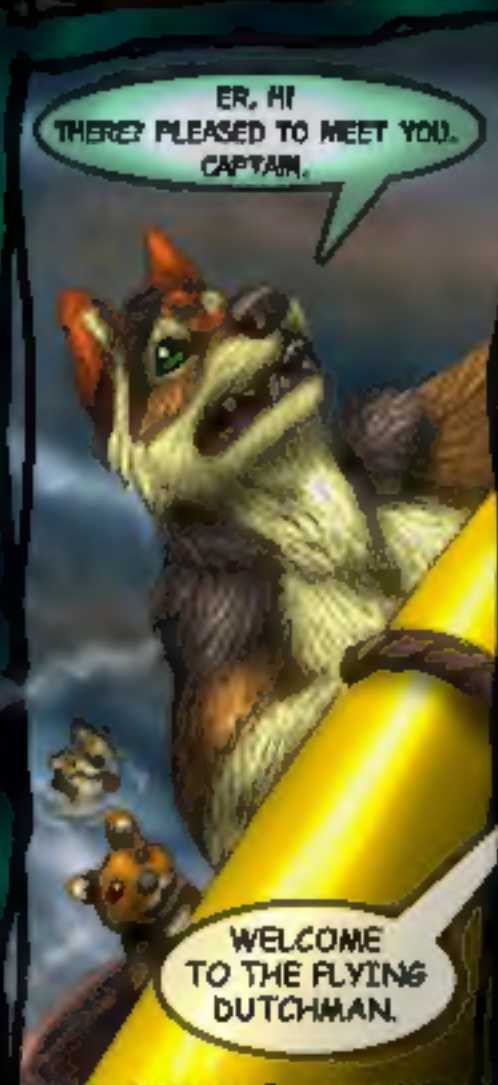
THANK GOD WE'RE FINALLY AT THE
BOAT, I DON'T WANT TO BE IN THIS DINGIE WITH
YOU CRACKPOTS ANYMORE.



YOU
FOUND YOUR FRIEND
QUICKLY.



FAITH, THIS IS
THE CAPTAIN.



ER, HI
THERE? PLEASD TO MEET YOU.
CAPTAIN.

WELCOME
TO THE FLYING
DUTCHMAN.



COME WITH ME, MISS: I'LL
EXPLAIN YOUR DUTIES FOR
THE DAY. THE REST OF YOU
ALREADY KNOW YOUR
ASSIGNMENTS.

DUTIES?



YOUR RESCUE IS IN PART
PAID BY GAOTH, BUT THAT
DOES NOT MEAN YOUR
PASSAGE IS FREE. IF YOU
ARE TO RIDE WITH US, YOU
MUST WORK, SAME AS WE DO.
THIS IS NOT A PLEASURE
CRUISE, MISS.

LOOK, I WAS JUST
KIDNAPPED BY CRAZY-ASS, DIMENSION-
HOPPING WEREWOLVES, DON'T YOU THINK
I DESERVE A BREAK?

DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING
TO NEED A DISTRACTION? OR DO YOU WANT
TO SULK ABOUT YOUR LIFE THE WHOLE WAY
BACK TO AMERICA?

... I WASN'T SULKING.

I UNDERSTAND
HARDSHIP, MISS. BETTER
THAN MOST.

THIS SHIP CAME FROM THE
NETHERLANDS, YOU KNOW. FINE, FINE SHIP.
SHE'S BEEN THROUGH MUCH OVER THE YEARS... BUT SHE AND I
ALWAYS MANAGE TO MAKE THE BEST OF OUR ADVENTURES.
YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN THROUGH MANY NAMES,
BUT HERS IS ETERNAL.

YOU'VE BEEN
THROUGH MANY NAMES? WHAT
DO YOU MEAN?



I STARTED OUT AS
CAPTAIN ATHENS. LEVI ATHENS. BUT A MAN
CAN ONLY LIVE AS A YOUNG MAN SO LONG BEFORE
PEOPLE GROW SUSPICIOUS. EVERY FIFTEEN YEARS OR SO,
I HAD TO GET AN ENTIRELY NEW CREW AND CHANGE MY
NAME... FOR A WHILE, I WENT WITH NO PROPER
NAME AT ALL, GOING ONLY BY...

...WELL, THE NAME THAT
STUCK MOST WAS VANDERDECKEN...
I CREATED SEVERAL VANDERDECKENS
OVER THE YEARS AS I SAILED. EVENTUALLY,
HOWEVER... I LEARNED MY LESSON ABOUT
HUMANS. THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND THE SEA'S
NATURE. OR MY... ODD... NATURE. I WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO STOP CHANGING MY NAME WHEN I BEGAN
TO ONLY ENLIST THOSE LIKE ME TO HELP WITH THE
SHIP, ELDRITCH FOLK, AS THEY'RE CALLED THESE
DAYS. BETWEEN THE LOT OF US, AND THE USE OF
OUR ABILITIES, THE FLYING DUTCHMAN BECAME
THE SHIP OF LEGEND YOU KNOW OF TODAY.
I'VE SAILED FOR... A VERY LONG
TIME. SEEN TERRIBLE THINGS.
DONE TERRIBLE THINGS.
LOST LOVED ONES.



WHY ARE YOU TELLING
ME ALL OF THIS?

TO HELP YOU GAIN PERSPECTIVE
AND TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO THINK
ABOUT WHILE YOU WORK...

YOU'RE
KIDDING ME...

I DO NOT
JOKE OFTEN.

YOU WANT ME TO SWAB THE
DECKS? SERIOUSLY? THAT'S, LIKE, THE
MOST CLICHE' THING EVER...

DO YOU KNOW
ANYTHING ABOUT HOW TO ATTEND
TO BROKEN RIGGING?

DO YOU KNOW
WHAT A JIBBOOM IS?

DO YOU EVEN KNOW
PORT FROM STARBOARD?

NO...

A WHAT?

UM...

MISS,
I KNOW
YOU'VE BEEN
THROUGH MUCH,
SO I WILL FORGIVE
YOUR ATTITUDE.
BUT I AM THE
CAPTAIN OF THIS
VESSEL, WHICH
YOU WOULD DO
WELL TO REMEM-
BER. I KNOW
WHAT EACH AND
EVERY PERSON ON
THIS SHIP IS BEST
CAPABLE OF DOING.
THIS IS THE JOB
YOU ARE CUR-
RENTLY BEST
SUITED
FOR...

Boo!



I CAN'T BELIEVE HE HAD ME
MOPPING! THIS IS THE OCEAN! CAN'T WAVES CLEAN
THE DECKS OR SOMETHING?

WELL, WHAT
DID THEY HAVE YOU
GUYS DO?

IT DOESN'T
WORK THAT WAY,
FAITH...

DIDN'T YOU
SEE ME? I, RRR KEPT THE WIND
BLOWING.



WHAT ARE YOU--

I HELPED
THE SHIP'S COOK!

HOW'D YOU
GET A FUN JOB?

JAYZUES, LIGHTEN UP.
I PEELED POTATOES AND WASHED DISHES. BUT,
I COULD EITHER MOPE ABOUT IT, OR, I COULD
JUST ACCEPT THE SITUATION.



YEAR, WELL, AFTER DAYS OF
BEING IN A DUNGEON, I'M NOT INCLINED TO BE
CHEERFUL, OKAY? I JUST WANT TO BE HOME. WHY
COULDN'T WE TAKE SOME OTHER WAY
HOME?

LOOK,
FAITH, YOU DON'T HAVE A PASSPORT, AND
THIS CAN'T BE TRACKED LIKE AIR FARE OR A NORMAL SHIP
COULD BE. BY THE TIME THE BERANDAMTI REALIZE YOU'RE BACK
HOME, WE'LL HAVE SOME WAY TO MAKE SURE THEY CAN'T GET
TO YOU. GAOTH'S GOT SEAMUS WORKING ON
IT AND--

GAOTH, RINPH.

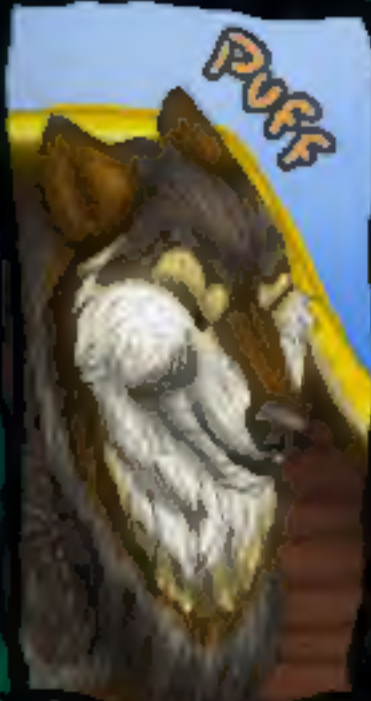
HEY, GAOTH'S AN OLD
FRIEND OF MINE. I KNOW YOU THINK THAT HE KEPT
SOMETHING FROM YOU, BUT I'M SURE HE HAD GOOD
REASONS.

The next day was more of the same. Finally saw what Todd meant though...

HUFF



PUFF



Woosh!



There was another werewolf on board... "Seedog" I heard one of the others call him. He... seemed to ignore me. In fact, the varied crew seemed to avoid most of us, except for Ty. I didn't exactly mind.

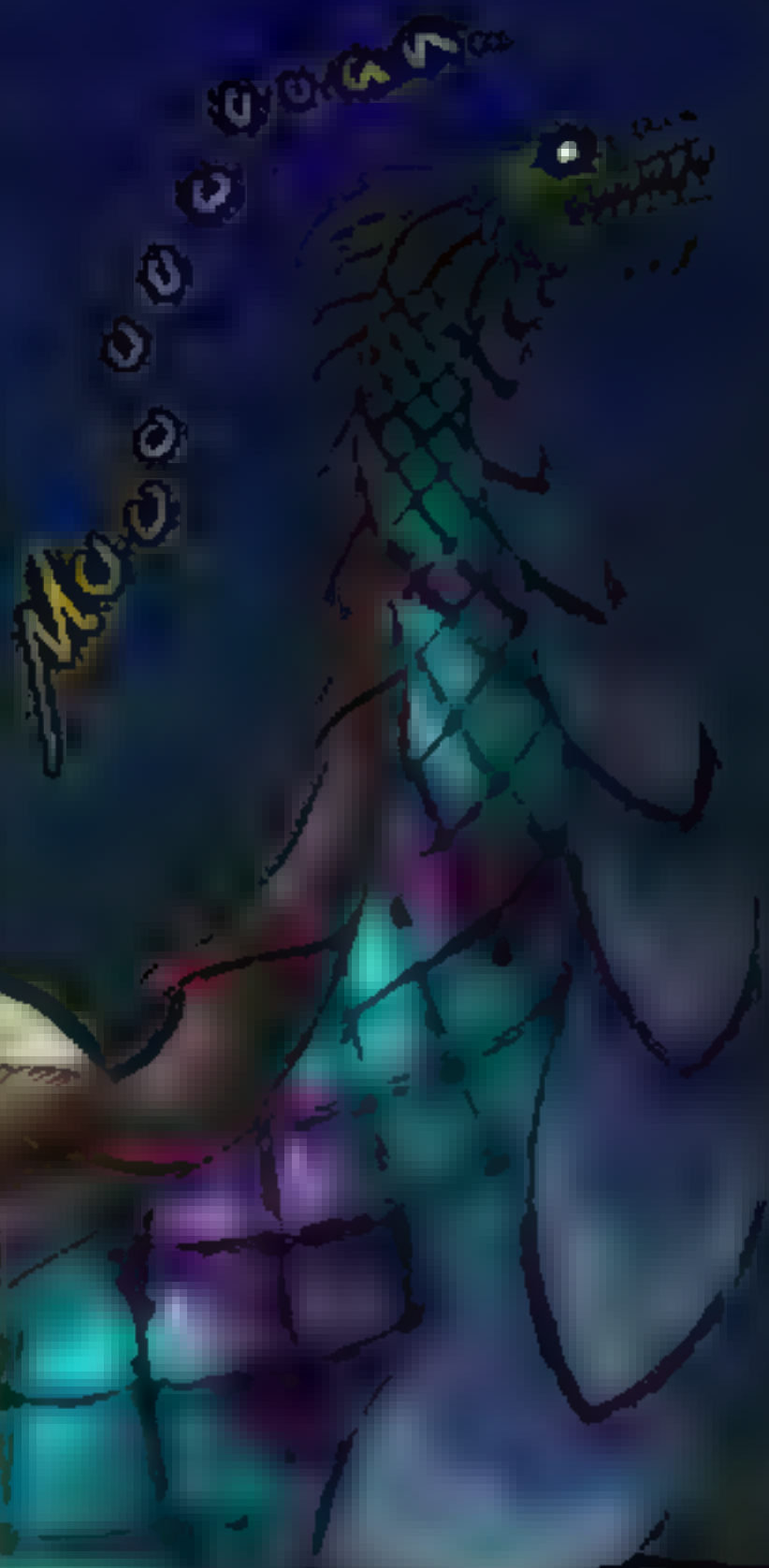


But when it came time to bed down, I couldn't sleep. So, I wandered back on deck, and relieved the person keeping watch.





ARE...
ARE YOU OKAY?

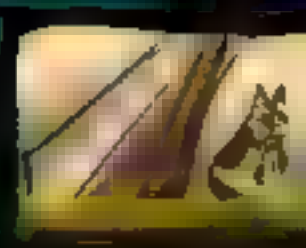


I'LL TAKE
THAT AS A YES!



I'd never seen anyone change like that... it seemed.. uncomfortable. I mean turning into a werewolf wasn't fun, but mostly it just felt strange. This... this was something different

It was a long night



THROW
DOWN THE LADDER, WOULD
YOU?

ARE YOU OKAY?

IT HAPPENS
ON ITS' OWN SOME-
TIMES. IF I STAY IN THIS
SMALL SHAPE FOR TOO
LONG, IT CAN HAPPEN SO
AGONIZINGLY AND
UNEXPECTEDLY..



IT MUST BE AWFUL TO BE FORCED TO TURN INTO SOME UNNATURAL SHAPE SO PAINFULLY AT LEAST FOR ME IT'S—

AS FAR AS
I'M CONCERNED, THE
HUMAN SHAPE IS THE
UNNATURAL ONE.

WHAT?



I MAY HAVE BEEN BORN HUMAN,
BUT I DID MOST OF MY GROWING UP AS A
MONSTER AFTER BEING LOST AT SEA. THE RULES ARE
DIFFERENT THERE.. MIGHT EQUALS RIGHT, AND IF YOU
WANT SOMETHING, JUST TAKE IT WHEN I EVENTUALLY
ENDED UP TRYING TO LEARN ABOUT HUMANS.. THEY DIDNT
MAKE SENSE. EXCEPT FOR THE PIRATES.. THEY MADE SENSE.. BUT..
BUT TO ME, THE HUMAN SHAPE FEELS UNNATURAL. BUT.. BUT IT'S
WORTH IT, BECAUSE OF MY CREW THEY'RE MY FAMILY.. HAVING A
FAMILY HELPED ME UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS TO BE HUMAN.

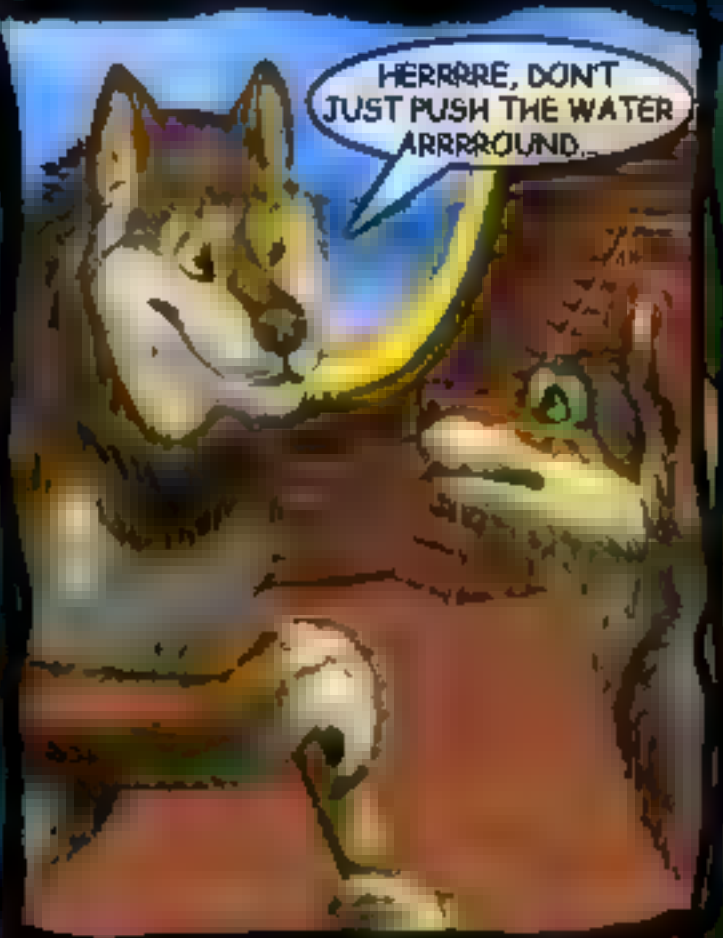


In a few hours, I was assigned the same task as the previous day...So, I mopped. Swabbed. Whatever. But instead, of moping about how I was stuck with such an awful job.. I wondered about the Captain. What if he had been captured like me once? What if it hurt for me to change? At least I knew when I'd be forced to change into a wolf... he seemed to have no warning...

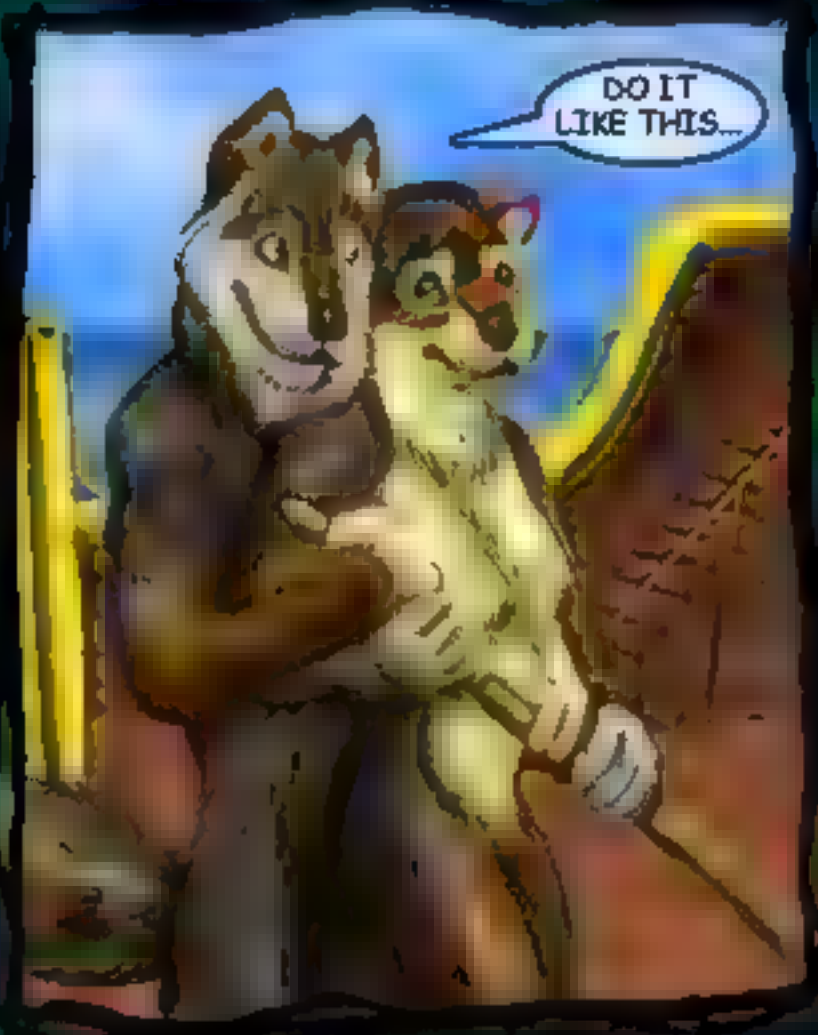




HOUSEWORK ISN'T MY
FORTE, OKAY, WINDBAG?



HERRRE, DON'T
JUST PUSH THE WATER
ARRROUND...



DO IT
LIKE THIS...



YODO, YOU
SCALLYWAG!



FIRST YOU
BARGE INTO THE
KITCHEN TRYING TO
FLATTER ME INTO GIVING
YOU TABLE SCRAPS, AND
NOW YOU'RE GETTING
ALL SNUGGLY WITH
FAITH? YOU DOG.

THE WIND MAY
BE BLOWING WELL ENOUGH
ON IT'S OWN RIGHT NOW, BUT
I BET THE CAPTAIN CAN GIVE
YOU ANOTHER TASK...

LAND HO!



THANK YOU,
MR. LASTIN. WE
MUST MAKE HASTE
TO GET THIS LOT
ON SHORE BEFORE
WE GO BACK TO
ITALY. READY
THE BOAT.

BACK TO ITALY?

GOT A GARBLED MESSAGE
FROM THERE. SOMETHING'S
GOING ON, BUT I DON'T KNOW
WHAT. HOWEVER, SOME
PEOPLE ARE ASKING FOR
TRANSPORT, THAT MUCH I CAN
TELL. AND TRANSPORT
MEANS MONEY



SO... THIS IS
GOODBYE, MR. DON? DON'T
SUPPOSE I'LL SEE YOU
AROUND THE LAYLINE
SOMETIME?



I IMAGINE I
MIGHT SEE YOU NEXT
TIME YOU GET YOURSELF
INTO SOME SERIOUS
TROUBLE



FOLLOW THE PATH THERE,
AND STAY ON IT. IT'LL LEAD YOU TO
THE CHECKPOINT WHERE LOCAL WOLVES
WILL HELP YOU OUT



LOCAL WOLVES?
NONONO... I DON'T WANT ANY
MORE WEREWOLVES.

BEGGARS
CAN'T BE CHOOS-
ERS, MATE



CHEERFUL PLACE...
I THINK I'M GONNA FLY ABOVE
THIS MUCK ..

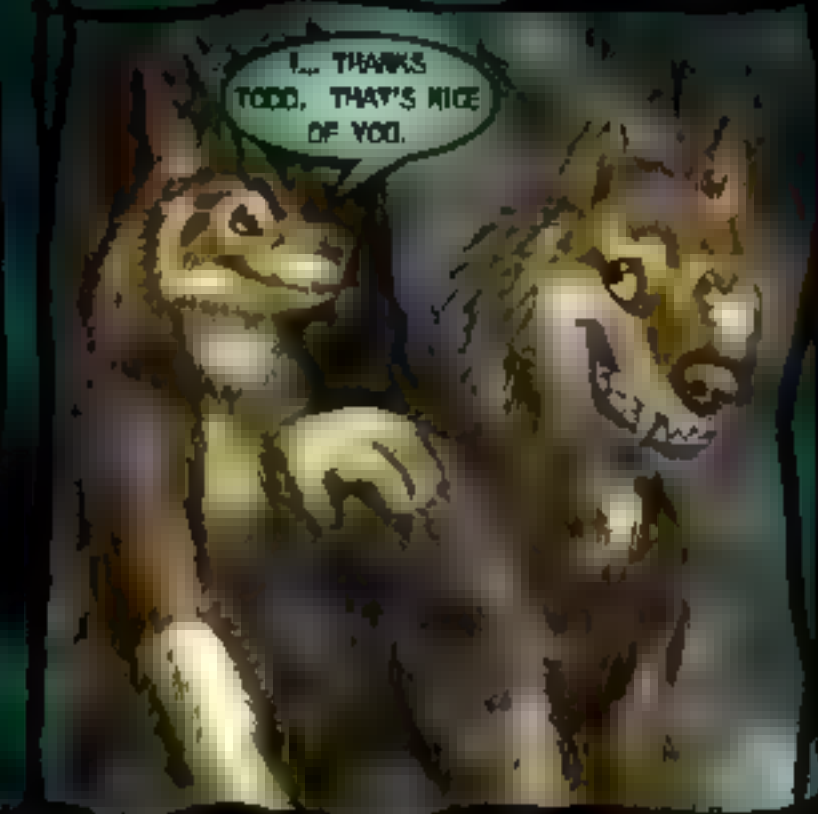


OH, FINE, LEAVE
US TO WADE THROUGH THE
ANKLE-DEEP SLIME, THANKS,
MAGGIE.

HEY, IT'S
NOT THE SLIME THAT'S
PROBLEM... IT'S
TO FLY



IF YOU WANT, I'LL
CARRRRY YOU...



I... THANKS
TODD. THAT'S NICE
OF YOU.

A brown fox and a white fox are standing in a forest. The brown fox is on the left, looking towards the right. The white fox is on the right, looking towards the left.

We followed the path
until it just.. stopped.

A fox is standing in a forest, looking towards the left.

WELL, I
GUESS THIS IS THE
CHECKPOINT

A fox is standing in a forest, looking towards the left.

THERE'S
NOWHERE ELSE
TO WALK...

A fox is standing in a forest, looking towards the left.

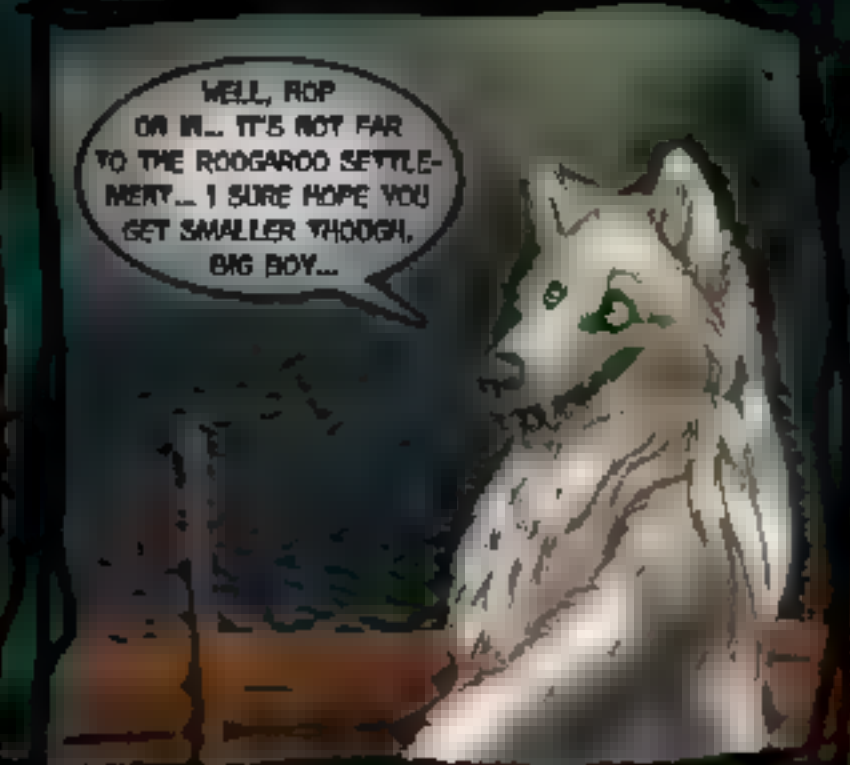
AND I DON'T
KNOW ABOUT SWIMMING
IN THESE WATERRRRS...
LEECHES...

A fox is standing in a forest, looking towards the left.

HELLO
DARLINGS! YOU'RE THE
ONES THAT LEFT DROPPED
OFF, RIGHT?

A brown fox and a white fox are standing in a forest. The brown fox is on the left, looking towards the right. The white fox is on the right, looking towards the left.

YEAH...

A fox is standing in a forest, looking towards the left.

WELL, ROP
ON IN... IT'S NOT FAR
TO THE ROOGAROO SETTLE-
MENT... I SURE HOPE YOU
GET SMALLER THOUGH,
BIG BOY...



POINT THE
WAY, I BET I CAN BEAT YOU
GLIVE THERE!



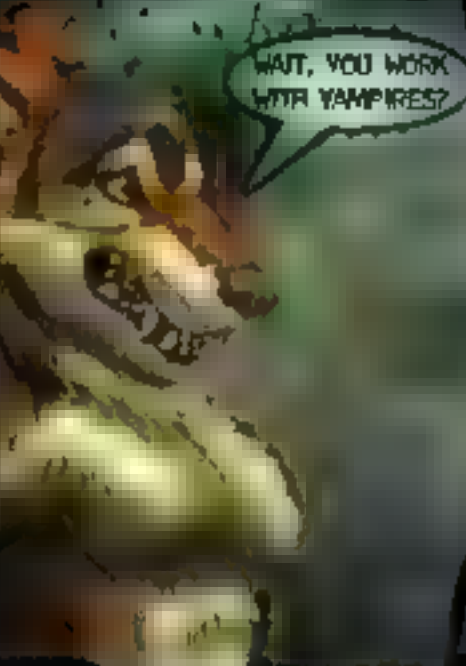
SO, OH,
ROOGAROO? WEREKANGAROOS
OR SOMETHING?

IT COMES
FROM THE FRRRENCH
WORD FOR WEREWOLF
LOUP GAROU



YEAH... A BUNCH OF FRENCH
CANADIAN COLONISTS ENDED UP SETTLING DOWN
HERE... AND A BUNCH OF THEM WERE WEREWOLVES.
SO. NOW DOWN HERE IN LOUISIANA, WE HAVE A PRETTY
GOOD FOOTHOLD IN THE SWAMPS. BETWEEN US KEEPING
THE PEACE IN THE BAYOUS AND THE YAMPS LOOKING
AFTER THE CITIES, WE MAKE SURE THERE ISN'T
A LOT OF TROUBLE DOWN HERE

GRARRR



WAIT, YOU WORK
WITH VAMPIRES?



OH SURE...
HOSPITABLE FOLKS, VAM-
PIRES ARE. THEY SURE DO
KEEP NEW ORLEANS'S NIGHT
LIFE ALIVE TOO



AM. LOOK, WE'RE HERE!

THAT'S IT?

YOU MAY NOT SEE MOST OF 'EM. BUT TRUST ME... THERE'S A LOT OF US. THEY CERTAINLY SEE YOU.



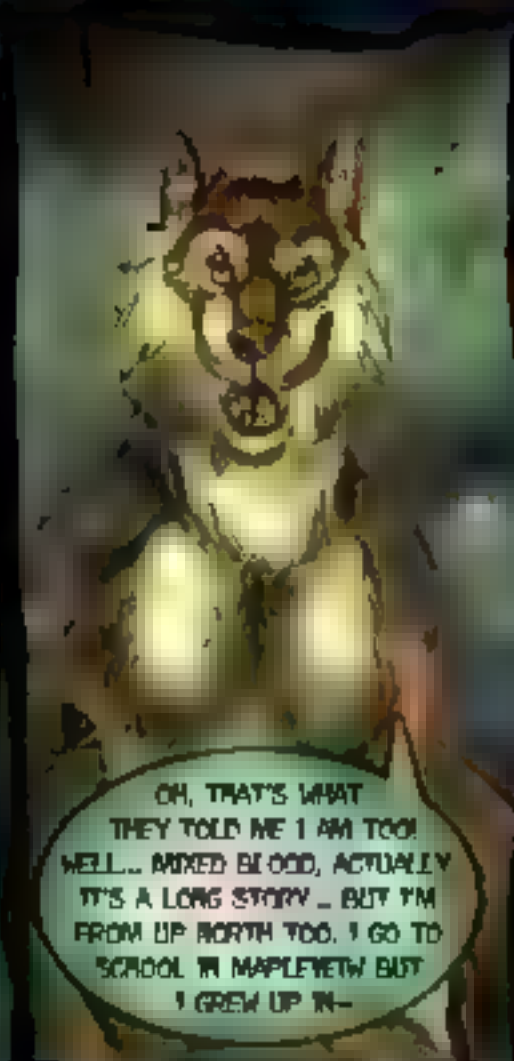
WE'RE JUST INTERESTED IN OUR PRIVACY OUT HERE.



WHY DO YOU SEEM A LITTLE MORE... WOLFISH THAN THESE GUYS?



OH, I'M NOT A ROOGAROO. I'M A GRAPE!... I USED TO LIVE UP NORTH, YEARS AGO...



OH, THAT'S WHAT THEY TOLD ME I AM TOO! WELL... MIXED BLOOD, ACTUALLY IT'S A LONG STORY... BUT I'M FROM UP NORTH TOO. I GO TO SCHOOL IN MAPLEVETW BUT I GREW UP IN—



MAPLEVETW? I... I GREW UP THERE!

HOW'D YOU END UP DOWN HERE?

WELL, THERE WERE
~~THESE HUNTERS THAT~~
NO, THEY WEREN'T HUNTERS;
~~THEY WERE LIKE THE HUNTERS~~
THERE WAS NO SPORT, NO RESPECT OR
LOVE FOR THEIR WEAPONS OR THEIR
QUARRY. THEY JUST LIKED THE KILL FOR
THE SAKE OF THE KILL. AND... EVEN
THOUGH THEY SHOT ME FULL OF HOLES,
~~AND I LOST A LOT OF BLOOD~~
LOSS, I DIDN'T DIE. WE'RE TOUGH, YA
KNOW. THEY SKINNED ME ALIVE AND
TOSSED ME NEXT TO MY PELT INTO THE
~~Woods of the Forest and I~~
DOWN HERE... I HEALED JUST
~~BEFORE THE HUNTERS~~
THE BED... AND THE ROOGAROO
FOUND ME BUT—

WAIT. YOU'RE... YOU'RE
LORREN, ARRRENT YOU? BUT IN THE
STORIES UP NORTH, YOU DIED!

OH WOW... I... I'M SORRY

I IMAGINE IT'D BE
EASY TO THINK SO, IF ANYONE
SAW WHA' HAPPENED TO ME. I SUPPOSE
WORSE HAPPENED TO TRAVIS AND FEYLAN... I
NEVER HEARD OF THEM AGAIN, THOUGH I WENT
~~DOWN THE MOUNTAINS WITH I WAS~~
THEIR SCENTS WERE ALL OLD...

NO, I AM. I SHOULDN'T BURDEN
YA' WITH MY BAGGAGE.. IF YOU ENDED UP BROUGHT
HERE BY THE FLYING DUTCHMAN, ODDS ARE YOU'VE
BEEN THROUGH WORSE...

EH, WELL. I WAS KIDNAPPED
BY CULTIST WEREWOLVES AND KEPT IN A
DUNGEON UNDER ROME. BUT AT LEAST
I KEPT MY SKIN...



MY SYMPATHIES,
LOVE... AHH, HERE
WE ARE..



AND
RRR, WHERERR, IS
HERE?

GRANNIE'S PLACE.
SHE HELPS PEOPLE IN TROUBLE,
HUMAN AND ELDRITCH FOLK ALIKE. THE
DIFFERENCE IS THAT SHE CHARGES
HUMANS. I'LL DROP YOU AND LET
YOU BE ON YOUR WAY...

HEY LAUREN?

HM?

IT WAS NICE MEETING
YOU. I'M SORRY ABOUT ALL OF
YOUR TROUBLES...

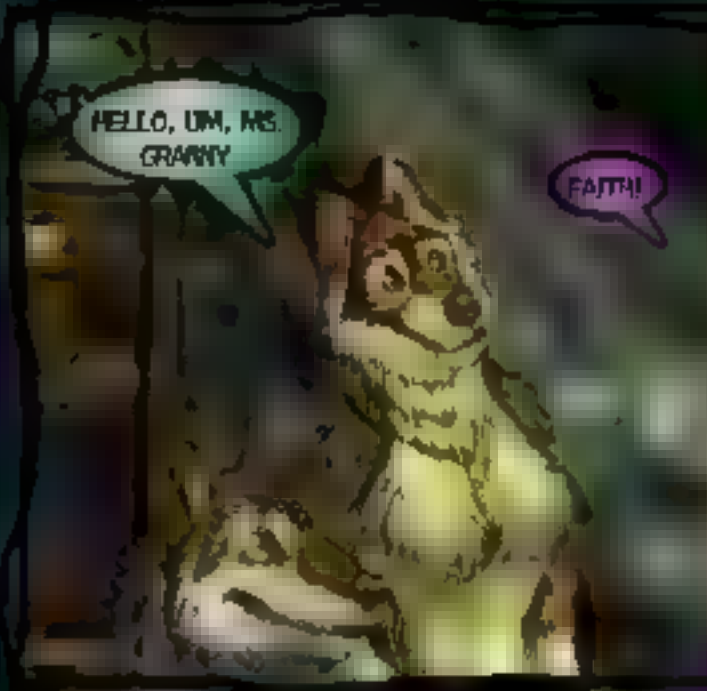
I TRY
NOT TO DWELL
ON TROUBLES. BEST
OF LUCK GETTING
HOME SAFE,
HON...

IT WAS SO NICE OF THE
WOLVES OUT THERE TO POINT ME IN YOUR
DIRECTION, AND THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE TALK
THOUGH I SHOULD GO MEET MY FRIENDS SOON. WOW.
~~FORGOTTEN TO MENTION YOU HAVE TROUBLES~~
~~SEVERE TROUBLES LIKE SYMPATHETIC MAGIC~~
SYMPATHETIC MAGIC AND ALL?

DARLIN, IF
THEY WORKED.
PEOPLE'D
BE DY'N' AND DOIN'
CRAZY THINGS ALL
THE TIME. THEY'RE
JUS' HARMLESS
THERAPY LIKE
SCREAMIN' INTO
A PILLOW

YOU SURE
HAVE A LOT OF SCREAMING
PILLOWS THEN.

THERE BE
LOTS AH FOLKS WHO
MAKE ME WANT TO
SCREAM, DARLIN.



HELLO, UM, MS. GRANNY

FAITH!



GRANNIE DEARIE, JU'S GRANNIE



I'M SORRY TO TRACK THIS RED STUFF INTO YOUR HOUSE... BUT THERE WAS NO MAT AND IT'S ALL OVER YOUR DECK



TWON'T HURT NUTHIN' DEAR. IT'S JU'S BRICK DUST

BRRRRICK DUST? BUT YOUR HOUSE HAS NO BRICKS?

I KNOW, AND DON YOU EVEN THINK OF BLOWING IT DOWN. I KNOW YOU WIND-WOLVES CAN CAUSE A WOMAN A LOT AH TROUBLES. OF COURSE IF YOU'D PLANNED ON BRINGING ME TROUBLES YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO CROSS THE BRICK DUST ANYWAY



BUT I DON'T UNDERSTAND—

SHHH SHHHSHH. NOW! YOU THREE WANT TO GET HOME DON'T YA?



RRRRRIGHT

YES. PLEASE!

YEAH!

YOU'VE
BEEN TRAVELIN' LEV'LINE'S
HAVENT YOU, DEAR?

NOT
INTENTIONALLY,
NO—

SNIFF

AHH, BUT YOU
TRAVEL EASILY. IT'S IN YOUR
BLOOD... WEAK THOUGH

WELL, I'M KIND OF
HOPING FOR TRAVEL BY BUS
OR SOMETHING...

YOU COULD
RRRRIDE ON MY BACK
THIS PLACE RRRRRREEKS OF
STRANGE MAGI—

NONSENSE, NONSENSE!
A BUS TAKES FAR TOO LONG, AN' YOU
BIG BOY, WOULD BE TOO CONSPICU-
OUS AN' YOU KNOW IT

WELL, GRAMMIE
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

THAT'S THE
ATTITUDE I'M LOOKING
FOR. I LIKE YA' GIRL, I
LIKE YA' A LOT

GRAB SOME
AH THAT POWDER. NO
NOT THE BLACK STUFF
THE WHITE

WHAT YOU
DOING?

I'M GOING
TO ASK THE LOA
TO SEND YA HOME
THE SAME WAY YOU
LEFT.. THROUGH A
LEYLINE.. SINCE YOU'RE
CLEARLY NOT ABLE TO
DO IT YOURSELF, YET,
BUT MOVE EASILY
ENOUGH. I BET THE
LOA COULD USE YA'
TO MAKE YOUR
FRIENDS MOVE
EASY TOO.

LOA?

SPIRITS DEAR,
SPIRITS.

WHAT IS ALL OF THIS? WHAT ARE YOU
DRAWING?

WHY, IT'S HOW YA' ASK, DEARIE.
IT'S HOW YOU ASK



NOW...
THINK OF HOME, ALL OF
YA'



Grannie began to
chant something, I
couldn't really make it
out though, the
longer she went the
more my hearing
seemed dulled.
Buried, in an odd,
auditory way. The
sounds of her place all
blended together
then faded.

And then the same thing happened to my vision,
the whole place seeming to spin and blur and
brighten until--



I HATE THIS
PARRRT...

Once again, it was so beautiful.



I missed it so much, Mapleview and my home
back in Wisconsin. I'd grown up there and--



Then I remembered, I had to think of home.

Suddenly there
was an odd jerk--

UGH...
WAIT, THIS ISN'T
HOME. IT DOESN'T,
RRRR, SMELL
LIKE IT

THEN WHERE ARE WE?

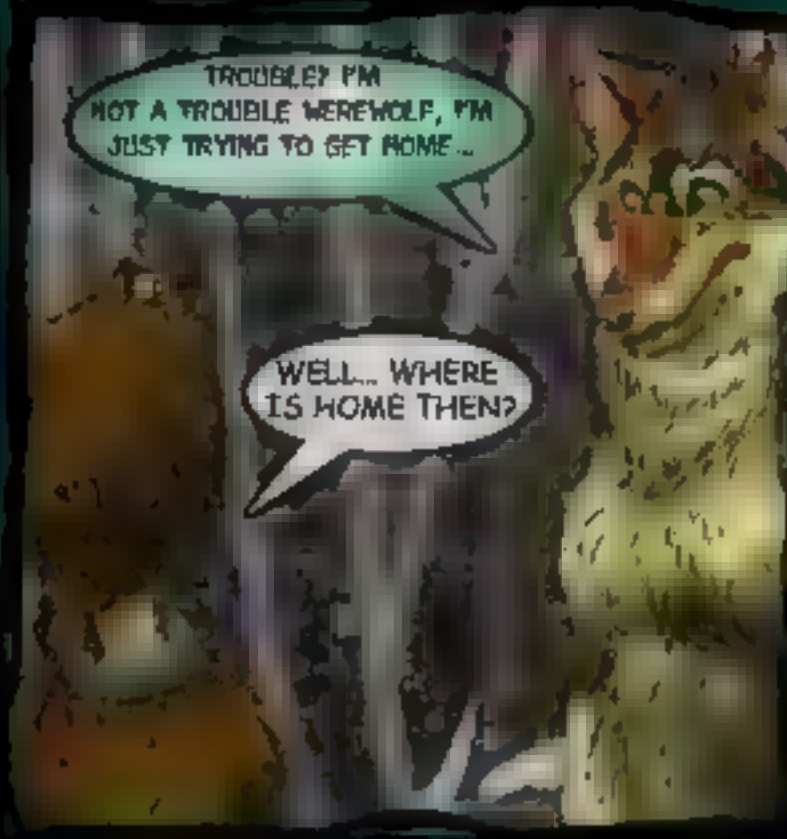
IT'S JUST AS COLD
AS HOME...

WELL,
THIS IS AN UNEX-
PECTED SURPRISE...

WHO ARE YOU?

NORMALLY
I GET A HEAD'S UP WHEN
TROUBLE WEREWOLVES ARE
HEADING UP HERE...

I
WAS
ABOUT
TO ASK YOU
THE SAME
QUESTION.



TROUBLE? I'M
NOT A TROUBLE WEREWOLF, I'M
JUST TRYING TO GET HOME...

WELL... WHERE
IS HOME THEN?



I DON'T SUPPOSE
MAPLEVIEW'S ALL THAT
CLOSE IS IT?

MAPLEVIEW...
WAIT YOU MEAN
LIKE MAPLEVIEW
UNIVERSITY?



YEAH



OH...
HOW YOU FOLKS GOT OUT
HERE BUT—

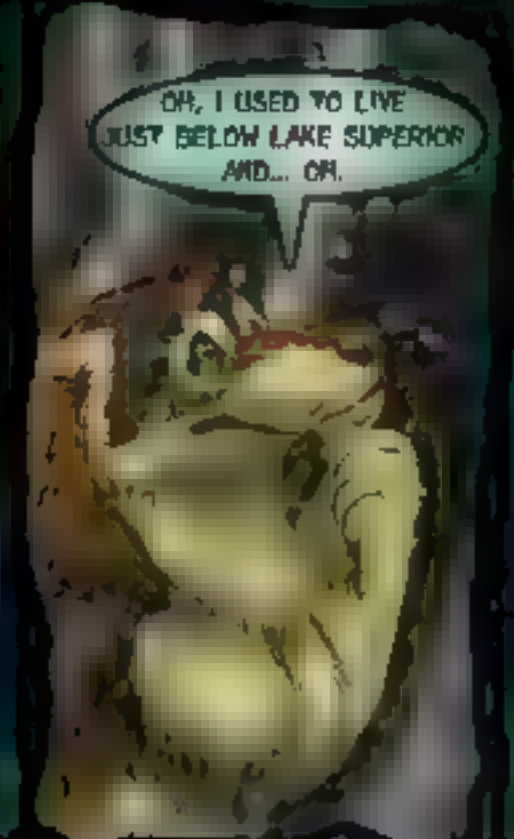
MESSED-UP
TRANSPORT MAGIC.

—YOU SHOULD
HAVE TAKEN A RIGHT TURN
AT THE LAKE YOU'RE IN
KETTLE MORaine STATE
FOREST..



WAIT, ISN'T THAT...

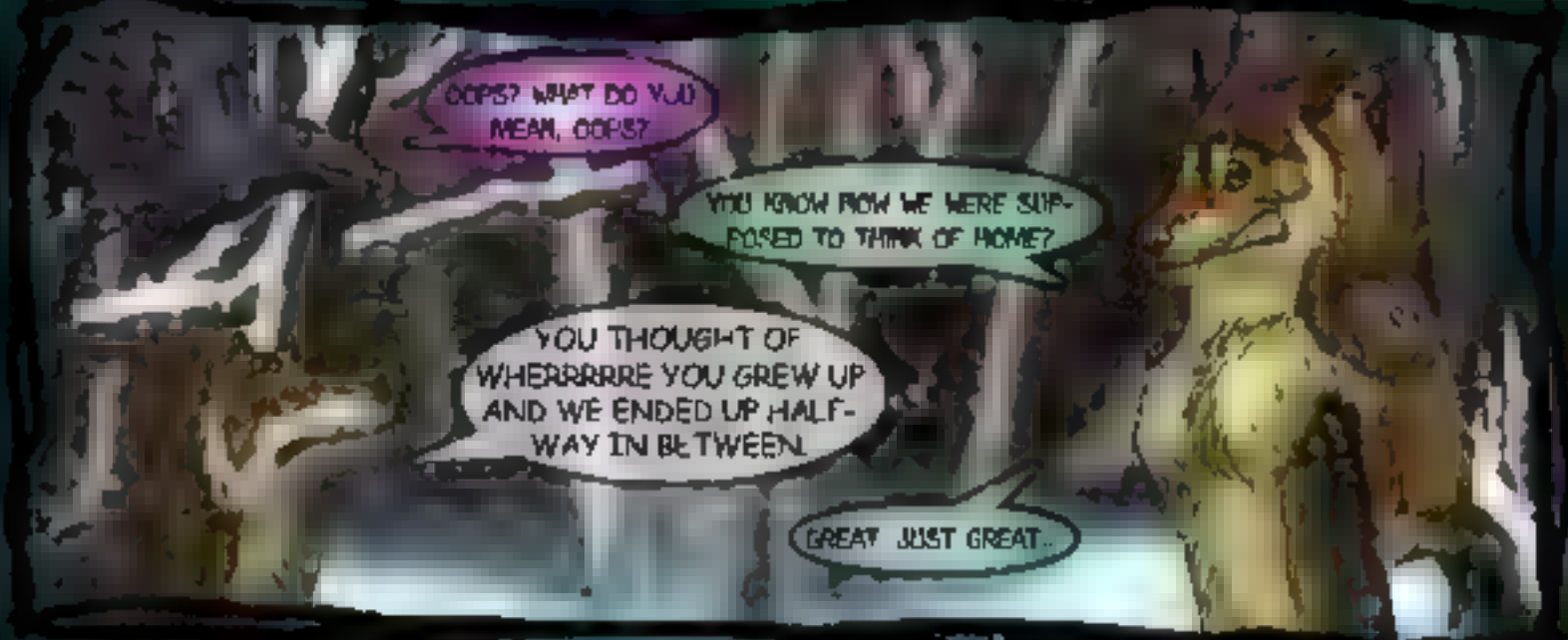
YOU'RE IN SOUTHERN
WISCONSIN.



OH, I USED TO LIVE
JUST BELOW LAKE SUPERIOR
AND... OH.



OOPS



OOPS? WHAT DO YOU
MEAN, OOPS?

YOU KNOW HOW WE WERE SUP-
POSED TO THINK OF HOME?

YOU THOUGHT OF
WHERE WHERE YOU GREW UP
AND WE ENDED UP HALF-
WAY IN BETWEEN.

GREAT JUST GREAT.



LOOK I'M NOT SURE WHAT'S GOING
ON EXACTLY BUT IF YOU WANT WE
HAVE A TRANSPORT ONE OF MY
WOLVES CAN DRIVE YOU OUT AND
COME BACK?



REAL TRANSPORTATION!
THANK YOU... UH... WHAT
ARE YOU CALLED?

RON LOVELL.



I RUN THE ELKHORN
WEREWOLF REHABILITATION
PROGRAM OUT HERE

THE WHAT?



REHABILITATION PROGRAM. LOTS
OF AREAS SEND THEIR TROUBLED WEREWOLVES
HERE AND WE TRY TO GET THEM BACK ONTO THEIR FEET
UNFORTUNATELY, THAT MEANS THAT WE HAVE A LOT OF
ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS. PEOPLE SEE US. THINGS
HAPPEN. ONE JOURNALIST'S BEEN FOLLOWING US FOR A
WHILE WE TRY TO GIVE HER A LITTLE SOMETHING TO
WORK WITH NOW AND AGAIN, JUST BECAUSE
WE LIKE HER THOUGH

It got dark as Ron lead us through the woods the smell of woodsmoke getting stronger and stronger until.

HERE WE ARE.
IT'S NOT MUCH, AND WE HAVE TO
MOVE OFTEN, BUT IT WORKS WELL
ENOUGH.

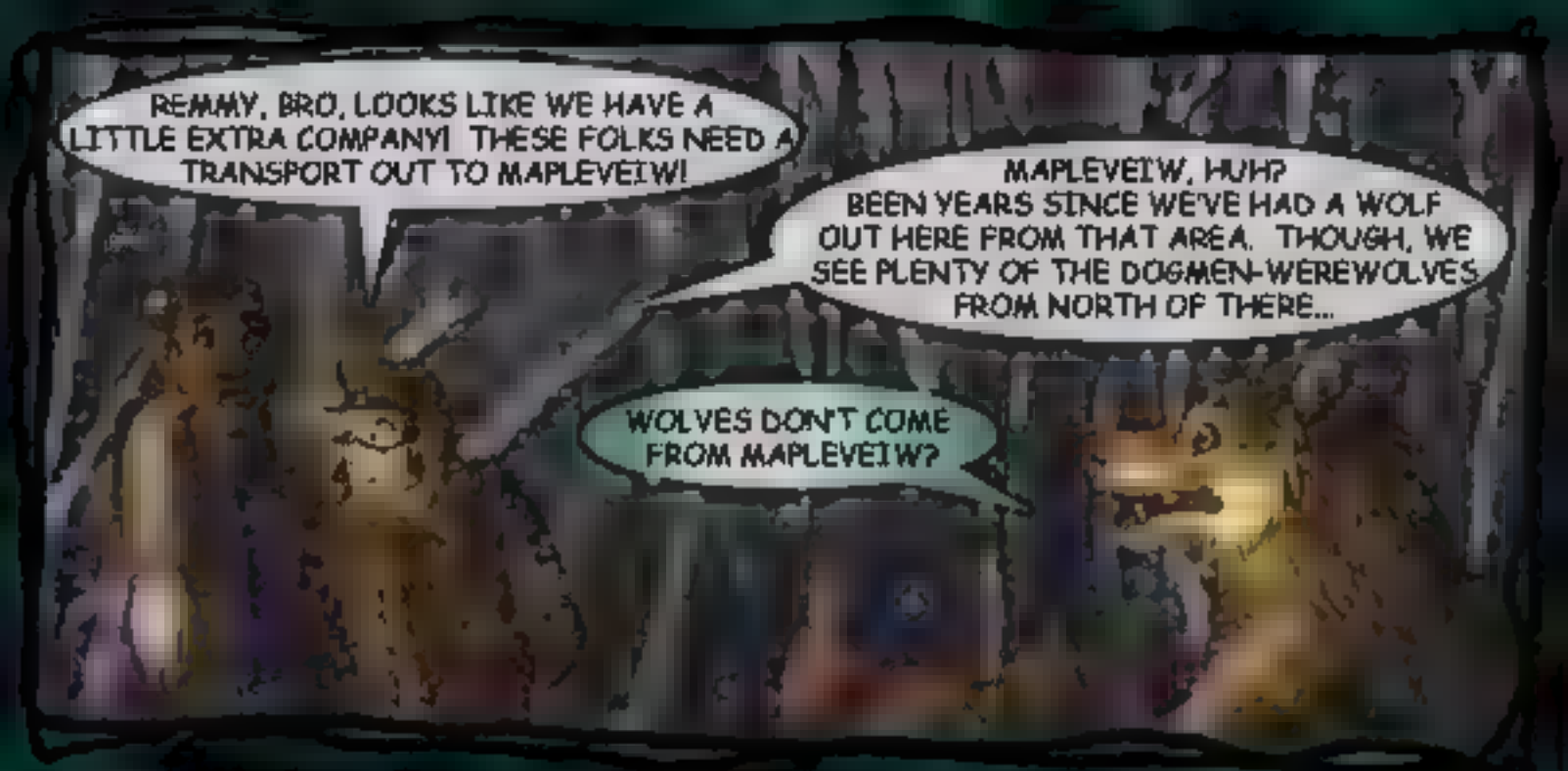
SEE THAT GUY?
HE WAS IN SUCH DENIAL ABOUT HIS
LYCANTHROPY THAT WHEN HE WOLFED OUT
HIS HUMAN MIND CHECKED OUT. HE
CAUSED A LOT OF TROUBLE.

AND HER? SHE'S
ACTUALLY REALLY GOOD AT
HOLDING OFF THE CHANGE. SHE CAN
STAY HUMAN THE ENTIRE NIGHT OF THE
FULL MOON SOMETIMES. BUT THROUGH HER
WE LEARNED THAT FIGHTING THE CHANGE
TOO MUCH LEADS TO HEALTH PROBLEMS A
WEREWOLF NORMALLY WOULDN'T HAVE,
LIKE HORMONE IMBALANCE AND
JOINT DETERIORATION.

OVER THERE WE HAVE
ANOTHER GENTLEMAN. HE SIMPLY
GAVE HIMSELF OVER TO THE WOLF AND REFUSES
TO TAKE PART IN HUMAN THINGS NOW. WE
JUST GOT HIM INTERESTED IN HUMAN MEDIA
AGAIN, THOUGH ALL HE'LL WATCH IS
ANIMAL PLANET.

RON, DUDE,
WHAT TOOK SO LONG?

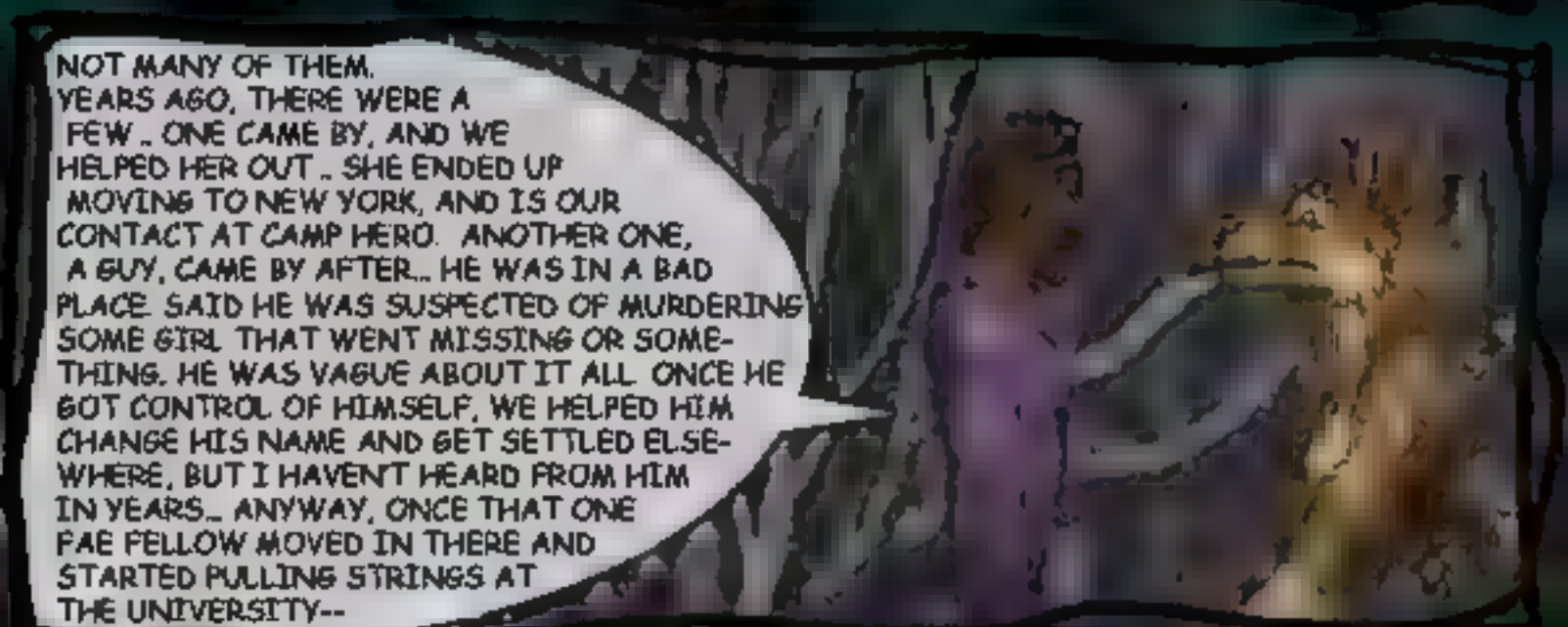
...WHO ARE
THESE GUYS?



REMMY, BRO, LOOKS LIKE WE HAVE A LITTLE EXTRA COMPANY! THESE FOLKS NEED A TRANSPORT OUT TO MAPLEVEIW!

MAPLEVEIW, HUH? BEEN YEARS SINCE WE'VE HAD A WOLF OUT HERE FROM THAT AREA. THOUGH, WE SEE PLENTY OF THE DOGMEN-WEREWOLVES FROM NORTH OF THERE...

WOLVES DON'T COME FROM MAPLEVEIW?



NOT MANY OF THEM. YEARS AGO, THERE WERE A FEW... ONE CAME BY, AND WE HELPED HER OUT... SHE ENDED UP MOVING TO NEW YORK, AND IS OUR CONTACT AT CAMP HERO. ANOTHER ONE, A GUY, CAME BY AFTER... HE WAS IN A BAD PLACE. SAID HE WAS SUSPECTED OF MURDERING SOME GIRL THAT WENT MISSING OR SOMETHING. HE WAS VAGUE ABOUT IT ALL ONCE HE GOT CONTROL OF HIMSELF, WE HELPED HIM CHANGE HIS NAME AND GET SETTLED ELSEWHERE, BUT I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM HIM IN YEARS... ANYWAY, ONCE THAT ONE FAE FELLOW MOVED IN THERE AND STARTED PULLING STRINGS AT THE UNIVERSITY--



YOU MEAN GAOTH?

YEAH, THAT'S THE GUY.

WAIT... THAT WOLF GUY'S NAME... WHAT WAS IT?

TRAVIS, I THINK...

OH REALLY?

LOOK, I CAN'T BE SURE. WE WEREN'T SO GOOD AT RECORD-KEEPING BACK THEN. COME ON, GUYS... I'LL GET THE TRANSPORT. IT'LL JUST BE A FEW HOURS. I'LL HAVE YOU THERE IN A SNAP

They got me some clothes after so long as a wolf it felt odd. And for most of the drive something of the wolf lingered at the edges of my senses. Human I was but I still felt wolf. The drive back gave me time to think and gave me time to realize something important.

OH CRAP. MAGGIE? CAN I BORROW YOUR PHONE? YOU HAVE IT RIGHT?

SURE

HEY MOM, YEAH, I KNOW. I KNOW I'M SORRY BUT I CALLED TO WISH YOU A LATE MERRY CHRISTMAS, AND AN EARLY HAPPY NEW YEAR. MY PHONE? UH, UM, YEAH! YOU'RE RIGHT THE ROTARY FINALLY BROKE. IT'S GETTING FIXED YOU DIDN'T, UM, GET MY EMAIL? THINGS MUST HAVE FU... UH, FUTZED UP. I KNOW I KNOW I'LL TRY TO KEEP IN BETTER CONTACT AND CALL MORE OFTEN. JUST... SCHOOL AND... YEAH. HUH?

YEAH, MY FRIENDS ARE GREAT HM? YEAH. I'M GLAD I FINALLY DECIDED TO MAKE SOME FRIENDS TOO. IT IS... REALLY UNLIKE ME TO HAVE A BUNCH OF FRIENDS. LOOK MOM, I OUGHT TO GIVE DAD A CALL TOO. YEAH YEAH I CALLED YOU FIRST.

Needless to say the drive felt longer for everyone else than it actually was.

When we finally got home, we gave Remmy gas money and thanked him again... promised we'd stay in touch.



It felt so odd to be back after such an ordeal. And even though I was in my room, in my bed, safe and sound... I didn't feel safe.



PLEASE, PROTECT ME...

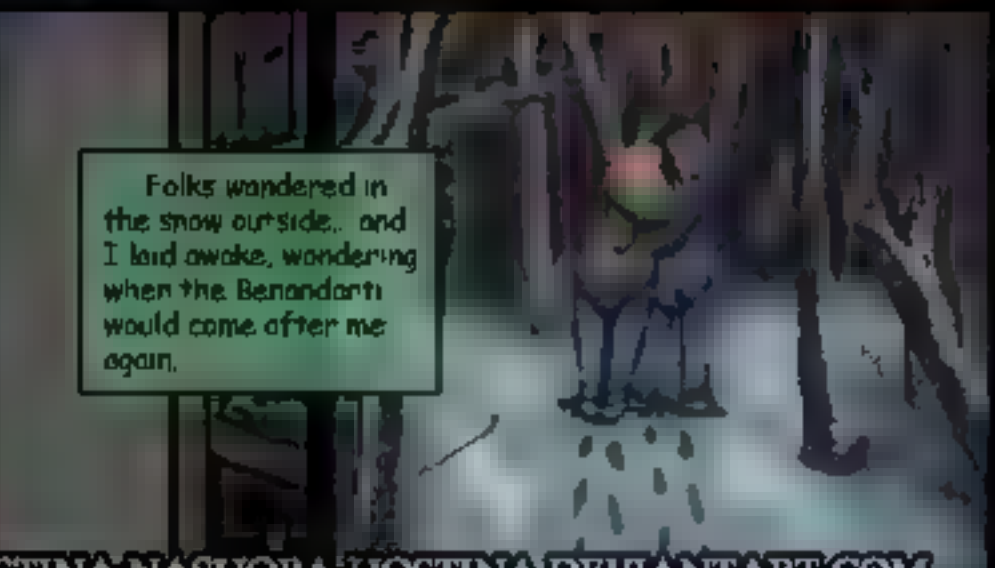
My Betta had been fed by a long-term feeder... thing that Maggie had put in the bowl.



My computer was happy to give me news of what happened while I was gone... including some assignments I was supposed to start before classes started back up again. Crap.



Folks wandered in the snow outside... and I laid awake, wondering when the Benandanti would come after me again.





JAYZEUS, FAITH, IT'S
NEW YEAR'S EVE!



YOU'VE HARDLY
LEFT OUR DORM. YOU HAVE TO
GET OUT AGAIN...

IT'S OKAY.
I'LL WALK YOU OVER.



MAGGIE,
LAST TIME WE WENT TO A
PARTY TOGETHER, WE WERE
ATTACKED BY MINDLESS
UNDEAD.



WELL, I'LL BE
HONEST, IT'LL BE MORE OF THE
SAME, SINCE DRUNK PEOPLE ARE
KIND OF SIMILAR.



LOOK
I PROMISE YOU'LL BE
FINE.

YOU PROMISE?

OF COURSE
I PROMISE. AND FOR MY BESTIE?
I'LL EVEN CROSS MY HEART.



The walk over to The Layline was surprisingly quiet.



Which was contrasted by the noise going on inside.



People drank, song, played games and overall had a blast.

But me, I sat down and watched.



Gaath was nowhere to be seen, of course. God help him when I did find him.



Todd was drunk as could be before I even got there. He didn't even notice me. Thank God for small favors.



GOOD TO SEE YOU FAITH.

HEY DYLAN. I, UH, THANKS FOR FINDING ME.

YEAH, WELL, IT ISN'T EASY. THE FARTHER AWAY PEOPLE ARE FROM ME, THE HARDER IT IS. SORRY I COULDN'T BE THERE FOR THE WHOLE THING... BUT I WAS EXHAUSTED FROM LOOKING FOR YOU, AND HAD TO WORK ON STUFF HERE TOO.

YEAH... HOW LONG TILL YOU GET YOUR PHYSICAL FITNESS DEGREE?

I WALK THIS SUMMER. HOW ABOUT YOUR FINE ARTS DEGREE?

I'LL... WELL, THAT DEPENDS ON HOW THINGS GO...

6

5



HEY LOOK... I PROBABLY SHOULDN'T TELL YOU, BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW... I OVERHEARD GAOTH TALKING WITH SOMEONE. WHOEVER THEY WERE, THEY WERE PISSED. SOMETHING'S GOING DOWN IN ITALY WITH THE BENANDANTI. SEEMS THERE'S DISSENT BETWEEN THE WOLVES AND THE OTHER SORTS. I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU...

4



SUGGESTED TO ONE OF THEM THAT THEY SHOULDN'T TAKE ORDERS FROM PSYCHO WOLVES? I MIGHT HAVE DONE THAT.

3



2

YOU'RE ALWAYS TROUBLE FAITH. BUT WE ALL LOVE YOU ANYWAY.

1



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



THERE YOU ARE! COME ON, FAITH, I DIDN'T GET YOU TO STOP HIDING IN THE DORM JUST FOR YOU TO HIDE AT THE BAR LIKE LAST TIME. YOU'VE GOTTA--

I CAN'T JUST IGNORE WHAT HAPPENED TO ME...

THEN LET GO OF IT FOR AN HOUR. GIVE YOURSELF THAT LONG.

I... I CAN DO THAT.

My life was changed forever this year.

I've done so much, seen so much.

I learned so much.

Survived so much.

And there is still so much I have to do, handle, and face. But I'm a different person than I was last year. Weaker than I was a few months ago, and yet, at the same time, also stronger.

I made the best friends a girl could ask for.

And... and that is a good note to start a new year off with.

End Chapter Six: Journeys